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OUTLAWS of the WEST

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OUTLAWS OF THE WEST

THIS IS THE STORY OF CHRIS YORK, A HANDY FELLOW WITH A GUN! HE RODE THE TRAIL TOWARD OUTLAWRY BUT ON THE WAY HE STOPPED FOR ONE NIGHT AT AN OLD CABIN AND THAT STOP CHANGED THE WHOLE COURSE OF HIS LIFE!

YEAH, I KNOW IT WAS AN EVEN BREAK! YOU'RE TOO HANDY WITH A GUN, CHRIS! ONE OF THESE DAYS A GUN-SLICK'LL COME ALONG WHO'S TOO FAST AN' YOU'LL HAVE TO SHOOT AT HIS BODY, NOT JUST HIS HAND... THEN YOU'LL BEGIN NOTCHIN' YOUR GUN!

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I JUST HEARD WHAT HAPPENED! CHRIS, I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS! I CAN'T MARRY A MAN WHO'S ALWAYS LOOKIN' FOR AN EXCUSE TO USE HIS GUN!

NOW, MOLLY, YOU'RE JUST JOSHIN'....

I'M NOT! HERE'S YOUR RING BACK, CHRIS! IF THE DAY COMES WHEN YOU'LL HANG UP YOUR GUNS, BRING IT BACK TO ME!

MOLLY, DON'T DO THIS TO ME! I...I'LL RIDE OFF TO JOIN THE BELLEW GANG! I SWEAR IT, MOLLY!

EVEN YOU CAN'T BE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO DO THAT! THOUGH PAW SAYS IF YOU KEEP USIN' THAT GUN SO MUCH YOU'LL BE OUTLAWED ANYWAY!

HE DOES, EH? AN' YOU BELIEVE THAT, LIKE EVERYBODY HERE DOES!

ALL RIGHT, I'LL SHOW YOU ALL! THINK I WON'T DO IT, EH? WELL, I'M HEADIN' UP INTO THE MOGOLLON RANGE TO FIND THE BELLEWS AN' JOIN UP WITH 'EM!

NO! CHRIS! YOU CAN'T...

ANGER WORKED IN HIM, THE THOUGHTLESS, INTENSE ANGER OF ARROGANT YOUTH! HE'D HURT HER THIS WAY HE KNEW, AND HE WANTED TO HURT HER! HE SPURRED AWAY TOWARD THE RISING PEAKS TO THE NORTH!

NO, CHRIS! COME BACK...

HE RODE HARD, PUSHING HIS HORSE AS HIS TURBULENT THOUGHTS PUSHED HIM! BY NIGHTFALL HE WAS DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS!

ALL RIGHT, MAYBE THIS IS THE WAY MY TRAIL WAS BENT, TOWARD THE OWLHOOT TRAIL! I'LL BECOME FAMOUS, A BIG NAME OUTLAW, A TOP GUN, AN' SOMEDAY I'LL RIDE BACK THERE, HIGH IN THE SADDLE AN' THEY'LL ALL BE AFEARED OF ME....

A

THE CALLOW THOUGHTS OF YOUTH... A WHISTLING IN THE DARK OF HIS MIXED-UP EMOTIONS!

CABIN! MIGHT'S WELL STAY THE NIGHT AN' START ON AGAIN EARLY! MUST BE SOMEONE THERE! THERE'S A LIGHT... NO, THERE IT GOES OUT!

CRACK!

PUT YOUR HANDS UP, DISMOUNT AN' WALK TOWARD THE CABIN!

THE VOICE WAS COLD AND HARD WITH A SIBILANT QUALITY!

I CAME FROM WILLOW WELLS! SAW, THE CABIN AN...

SHUT UP! YUH AIN'T A BELLEW SO YOU'VE GOT NO BUSINESS UP HERE! WE TAKE NO CHANCES!

CHRIS SAW THE FLAT GLITTER OF THE MANS EYES AS HE RAISED HIS GUN! HE KNEW WHAT WAS COMING! SUDDENLY A FIT OF COUGHING TOOK THE MAN... AND CHRIS DREW AND SHOT...

I RODE UP HERE TO FIND THE BELLEWS, TO JOIN THEIR GANG!

COUGH! COUGH!

THE COUGHING FINALLY SUBSIDED! WEAKLY THE GUN-MAN SAT DOWN ON AN EMPTY BOX!

THE BELLEWS C'N USE A FAST GUN LIKE YOU! BUT YUH WOULDN'T HAVE PULLED THAT ON ME EXCEPT FOR MY COUGHIN' SPELL! I GOT THE LUNG SICKNESS, FROM TEN YEARS IN YUMA PEN! I'M YANK BELLEW!

BUT...BUT I HEARD THE BELLEW BROTHERS WERE ALL YOUNG, IN THEIR EARLY THIRTIES!

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M THIRTY THREE! LOOK OLDER, EH? WELL, A MAN DON'T LIVE TO A RIPE OLD AGE IN THIS BUSINESS! IT'S EITHER SICKNESS FROM THE PEN OR A BULLET GETS YUH! PUT OUT THE LIGHT, I GOTTA SLEEP! TAKE YUH TO THE HIDEOUT IN THE MORNIN'!

YOU REMIND ME OF MYSELF WHEN I WAS A YOUNG 'UN! WAS BUILT ABOUT LIKE YOU AN' FAST LIKE YOU WITH A GUN!

HE'S MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE, BUT STILL A GUN-SLINGER!

THE RATTLING SNORES OF YANK BELLEW BROKE THE QUIET THAT SETTLED!

AN' HE WAS LIKE ME! LOOK AT HIM NOW! A FAST GUN AN' BEFORE YUH KNOW IT YOU'RE RIDIN' THE OWLHOOT TRAIL! NO! IT AIN'T FOR ME!

QUIETLY CHRIS SLIPPED FROM THE CABIN, MOUNTED AND RODE AWAY... TOWARD WILLOW WELLS!

I DON'T WANT TO BE AN' OLD MAN IN TEN YEARS, A LIVIN' CORPSE WITH NOTHIN' BUT MEANESS, SHIFTINESS AN' DISTRUST! A MAN LIKE THAT MUST NEVER SEE THE SUN OR THE GRASS, EVERYTHING MUST BE GREY AN' BITTER AN' EMPTY!

SO CHRIS CAME HOME TO WILLOW WELLS, AND FOUND MOLLY WAITING!

OH, CHRIS, I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME BACK! I KNOW NOW I CAN NEVER GIVE YOU UP! WILL YOU FORGIVE ME?

HUSH, HONEY! AIN'T NOTHIN' TO FORGIVE! YOU WERE RIGHT AN'...I'M HANGIN' UP MY GUNS FOR KEEPS!

THE END

APPRENTICE BADMAN

WHEN THEY BLEW OUT THE SIDE OF THE LOBO WELLS JAIL, THE RIA BLANCA GANG TOOK EVERY PRISONER IN THEIR RUN FOR FREEDOM! JOE SEGURA, THE LEADER OF THE OWLHOOTERS, NEEDED MEN FOR HIS BAND...EVEN MEN LIKE LEO SALLES, A PETTY THIEF JAILED FOR TAKING MONEY FROM THE FARO TABLE IN THE FULL HOUSE SALOON!

COME ON, BOYS! HEY, SALLES, USE THAT GUN!

BAM

BAM

TOWN B

TWING

PING!

5653

COME ON, BILL! WE CAN CATCH 'EM!

WE DON'T WANT TO, JODY! LET THEM GO...

I HAD A HUNCH JOE SEGURA WOULD BREAK OUT...SO I TOOK STEPS TUH MAKE SURE I'D GET HIM BACK WHEN I WANTED HIM! PLUS THE REST OF THE GANG FROM THE RIA BLANCA CANYON!

JOE SEGURA, AN OUTLAW WHO'D SPENT MOST OF HIS ADULT LIFE IN PRISON, WAS A DESPERATE, RUTHLESS MAN...A MAN WITH VERY BIG PLANS!

WE LOST 'EM, AMIGOS! SALLES, YOU SCARED O' GUNS?

NO, SIR, BUT I AM NOT ACCUSTOMED TO THEIR USE!

MAYBE YOU'LL TEACH ME HOW TO USE A REVOLVER WHEN YOU HAVE TIME, BOSS?

SURE...WHY NOT! COME ON, LET'S GET ALONG TUH THE RIA BLANCA!"

SEGURA HAD MORE THAN TWENTY GUN-SLINGERS IN HIS RIVER CANYON CAMP... AND THERE WERE SENTRIES POSTED WHO HAD SHARP EYES!

HOLD IT, YOU IDJIT! IT'S ME...JOE SEGURA!

PING!

GEE, BOSS, YOU OWN THIS TOWN?

YEAH, IT'S ALL MINE, EVERY ROTTEN BOARD AN' CRUMBLIN' CHIMNEY! WE WE GOT PLENTY O' SUPPLIES AND AMMUNITION HERE TOO!

NOBODY C'N GET AT US IN HERE! UNSADDLE THE HORSES AN' RUB 'EM DOWN! YOU'VE GOTTA BE USEFUL AROUND HERE OR ELSE...

OR ELSE?

OR ELSE THIS, YOU CLOWN!

OUR NEW MAN JUST LEARNED HIS FIRST LESSON! I RECKON HE THOUGHT HE WAS GONNA LIVE HIGH WITHOUT EARNIN' HIS KEEP!

THANKS FOR SNEAKIN' IN GUNS AN' DYNAMITE, LEFTY! NOW...LET'S GET DOWN TUH BUSINESS! DUKE, YUH CASED THE NEXT JOB?

YEAH, IT'LL BE EASY..

OUTSIDE, LEO SALLES, THE PETTY THIEF, WAS MAKING PLANS TOO...

SEGURA'S A TOUGH HOMBRE--REAL TOUGH! THIS IS THE WORST BUNCH I'VE EVER TANGLED WITH IN MY TEN YEARS WITH THE RANGERS!

IF SHERIFF WILLIAMS TRIED TO BRING A POSSE IN HERE, HE'D LOSE A DOZEN MEN! WE'RE LUCKY I DECIDED TUH TRY IT MY WAY...

SEGURA'S GOT SENTRIES ALL AROUND THE PLACE! I CAN SEE THREE OF THEM FROM HERE!

DON'T GET TOO NOSEY FOR A WHILE, TENDERFOOT! WE'RE WATCHIN' YUH ALL THE TIME!

CLICK!

LET'S GO--SEGURA WANTS TUH SEE YUH ANYHOW! WE'RE GONNA USE YOU ON THE NEXT JOB!

SEGURA ALWAYS PLANNED CAREFULLY... THIS TIME, HE EVEN HAD A PLAN FOR GETTING CAUGHT!

LOOK, SONNY, THERE'S A CHANCE THE LAWMAN IN BENTON MAY GET WISE IN TIME TUH SHOOT US UP! THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN!

ME? I ...I'M NOT VERY GOOD WITH GUNS!

YOU WON'T HAVE TO BE! YOU'LL RIDE TUH BEN-TON AN HOUR AHEAD OF US, ACT INNOCENT, STAND OUTSIDE THE BANK...

I'VE GOT IT SO FAR, BOSS...

WHEN WE COME OUT, YOU KEEP QUIET, NO GUN SHOWIN'! IF WE GET AWAY, YOU RIDE OUT THE OTHER END OF TOWN IN THE CON-FUSION, THEN JOIN UP WITH US BACK HERE!

WHAT IF THERE'S TROUBLE?

SALOON

IF WE HAVE TROUBLE, YOU OPEN UP ON THE SHERIFF FROM BEHIND! THAT WAY, WE'LL BE A CINCH TUH MAKE IT OUTA TOWN! DON'T FAIL! IF YUH DO, I'LL HUNT YUH DOWN!

THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS-- LEO SALLES RODE AHEAD FOR BENTON --HE WAS JOE SEGURA'S BAIT FOR THE LAWMEN IF TROUBLE STARTED!

THIS SHOULD BE EASY! I'LL FIND THE LOCAL SHERIFF, TELL HIM THE PLAN, THEN WE TAKE SEGURA AND HIS WHOLE GANG!

IT WASN'T THAT EASY--THE SHERIFF AND A POSSE WITH ALL THE ABLE-BODIED MEN IN TOWN WERE OUT ON THE TRAIL!

THERE'S NOT A MAN IN TOWN, STRANGER! WHY?

LOOK, DAD, TROUBLE'S COMIN' TO TOWN RIGHT QUICK! SPREAD THE WORD--GET THE WOMEN AND KIDS UNDER COVER! TELL THE BANKER TO LOCK HIS DOORS!

I'VE GOT TO DO IT ALONE!

SEGURA AND HIS FOUR GUNWHIPS RODE IN, COCKY AND DANGEROUS...

YOU GENTS KNOW WHAT TUH DO! LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE THIS TIME--THE TOWN'S EMPTY!

WHERE'S THE MEN, SALLES? THEY HIDING? IS THIS A TRAP?

THE SHERIFF TOOK A POSSE OUT THIS MORNIN'--IT'S NOT A TRAP!

WHAT'S WRONG, SALLES? THIS DOOR IS LOCKED!

THE ROADS OUT ARE BLOCKED, SEGURA! THROW DOWN YORE GUN--YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

THEY ALL CUT LOOSE AT ONCE...EVERY OUTLAW SHOT AT LEO SALLES BUT THE UNDERCOVER LAWMAN WAS MOVING FAST!

CUT 'IM DOWN!

PING!

PING!

BAM

BAM

BAM

FIVE THOUSAND TUH THE ONE WHO GETS HIM!

PING!

SALLES WAS HIT, THEN HE WAS CREASED AGAIN--THE OUTLAWS' WERE FILLING THE AIR AROUND HIM WITH LEAD-- WHILE HE COLDLY AIMED AND FIRED-- AND GOT THEM ALL!

BAM

BAM

IF ONE OF YUH MAKES A MOVE, I'LL PUT ANOTHER SLUG WHERE IT WON'T TICKLE!

I'LL WATCH 'EM FOR YUH, YOUNGSTER!

THE DOC'S ON HIS WAY, SON! NONE OF 'EM ARE HURT BAD! YE MUST BE A POOR SHOT!

NO--I HIT WHAT I AIM FOR, DAD! BUT THE RANGERS TRY TO BRING IN PRISONERS...NOT CORPSES!

END

THEY WERE CALLED THE FOUR FASTEST GUNMEN IN ARIZONA--BIG MIKE PURDY, DOGGO SYKES, CLAW CARROL, AND SAMMY BLACK/ NO LAWMEN FOUND THEIR HIDE-OUT IN BUZZARD VALLEY--AND THEY MIGHT NEVER HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IF THEY DID NOT TRY TO LOOT THE TUCSON BANK/ THE LAW CAUGHT UP WITH THEM THERE.... ALL EXCEPT....

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

BEEEYUHHP, BOY/

GIVE UP, PURDY/ SAMMY BLACK'S RUNNIN' OUT ON YUH/

TUCSON BANK

THREE OF THE FOUR WERE CAUGHT AT THE TUCSON CORRAL--PURDY AND DOGGO SYKES WERE WOUNDED BUT THEY'D RECOVER FAST/ CLAW CARROL'S OWLHOOT DAYS WERE OVER..

WE'VE GOT YOU THIS TIME, PURDY/

FENSTER, I DON'T GIVE A HOOT--YUH WON'T KEEP ME/ I'M GONNA BUST OUT AN' GET THAT YELLA COYOTE, SAMMY BLACK/ HE LEFT US HIGH AN' DRY/

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY-- SAMMY BLACK-- WAS PUSHING HIS HORSE, HEADING FOR THE BADLANDS AND BUZZARD VALLEY...

THE SHOOTIN'S OVER--I RECKON THE LAWMEN NAILED THE BOYS!

IF I'M LUCKY I'LL GET TO BUZZARD VALLEY ON TIME--IT'S GONNA BE TICKLISH THOUGH!

THE WAY SHERIFF FENSTER AND I PLANNED IT, I WAS GONNA GIVE MYSELF UP WITH THE OTHERS/ I'M PLUMB TIRED O' PLAYING AT BEIN' AN OUTLAW/

ONE O' THESE DAYS, I'LL MEET AN OWLHOOTER WHO KNEW ME WHEN I TOTED A BADGE/ THEN, IT'LL BE OVER...

AN' I'LL BE LUCKY IF I DON'T WIND UP IN THE BUZZARD VALLEY BOOT HILL!

SAMMY BLACK ARRIVED IN THE OUTLAW HANG-OUT AT NOON THE NEXT DAY...

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

I'M TIRED OF ACTIN' LIKE A MURDEROUS LOUD-MOUTH! I SURE WISH I'D GONE INTO THE GROCERY BUSINESS WITH UNCLE DAN!

RITZ SALOON

INSIDE, SAMMY BLACK LOOKED LIKE A DIFFERENT MAN! HIS WORN COLT, UNFIRED IN THE FIGHT AT COCHISE CROSSING, APPEARED IN HIS FIST AND...

HUH? H-HOWDY, SAM! GLAD TUH SEE YUH BACK IN TOWN!

WAKE UP, YUH POLECAT!

WHERE'S BIG MIKE, DOGGO, AN' CLAW CARROL? YUH RODE OUT WITH THEM, DIDN'T YUH, SAMMY?

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! MY HORSE THREW A SHOE AND I HAD TO TURN BACK--THEY OUGHTA BE HERE SOON!

HOW COME NO ONE TOLD ME ABOUT THE GENT BIG MIKE HAS HID OUT UP AT SILVERLODE? YOU GUYS DON'T TRUST ME?

PURDY TOLD ME TUH KEEP QUIET ABOUT HIM--HE SAID A U.S. MARSHAL WAS GOOD INSURANCE IN CASE HE EVER GOT NABBED BY A LAWMAN!

PURDY'S SMART--HE FIGURES THE LAW WILL SWAP FOR THE LAWMAN! HE'S RIGHT TOO!

PURDY DON'T WANT NO ONE GOIN' NEAR THE MARSHAL, SAMMY! YOU STAY AWAY FROM SILVER-LODE, YES?

I STAY AWAY, NO! DON'T TELL ME WHAT TUH DO!

YOU STAY AWAY LIKE TONIO SAYS OR...

YOU'LL TAKE ME TO THE LAWMAN, TONIO! NOT CAUSE I LIKE LAW-MEN--I JUST WANTA KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON IN BUZZARD VALLEY!

TONIO HAD NO CHOICE... AND NO ONE ELSE DARED CHALLENGE THE GUNS OF SAMMY BLACK!

HE IS INSIDE, SEE FOR YOURSELF!

SAMMY BLACK WENT IN, APPARENTLY UNSUSPECTING...AS TONIO PALMED A DERRINGER!

LOOK OUT, MISTER!

PERHAPS I SHOULD'VE LET HIM SHOOT YOU! IF ENOUGH OF YOU RASCALS DID THAT, I'D HAVE A CHANCE OF GETTING AWAY!

NOW DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, MARSHAL! I'M ON YORE SIDE OF THE LAW!

HOW'D YUH BREAK THE LEG? ONE OF PURDY'S GANG DO IT?

NO--I FELL CLIMBING DOWN A CLIFF TRYING TO SNEAK IN HERE! TONIO FOUND ME AND BIG MIKE SET MY BROKEN LEG!

MIKE PURDY TOOK CARE OF ME TO KEEP ME ALIVE!

YEAH--HE'LL MAKE A DEAL-TRADE YUH FOR HIMSELF AND SYKES!

HE AND SYKES ARE IN TUCSON--I HEARD THEM MENTION YOU JUST BEFORE WE RODE INTUH TOWN TUH ROB THE BANK! SO INSTEAD OF GETTING CAPTURED WITH THEM, I HAD TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT AND RETURN HERE!

SAMMY BLACK HEARD THE HAMMER CLICK AS THE BARTENDER COCKED THE .45--HE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO DRAW, TURN, AND FIRE/ BUT THE BROKEN-LEGGED MARSHAL DID. .

LOOK-OUT/

WHEW/ THAT WAS CLOSE/ WHERE'D YOU GET THE GUN?

I HAD IT HIDDEN/ HELP ME UP--WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE/

THEY KNOW YOUR A LAWMAN NOW, BLACK/ WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE/

THEY'RE BOTH MARSHALS-- IF WE LET 'EM GET AWAY, WE'RE COOKED/

THE FIRST WINCHESTER SLUG RIPPED THROUGH THE FLIMSY SHACK A SECOND LATER...

WERE IN FOR IT NOW; THESE WALLS WON'T STOP A SLUG/

WE CAN'T RUN FOR IT--YOU CAN'T EVEN WALK ON THAT BUSTED LEG/

WE HAVE A CHANCE, SAM/ THIS IS A MINER'S SHACK--THERE ARE STILL STICKS OF T.N.T. IN A BOX UNDER THIS BUNK/

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT TWO PAGES

YOU WANT TO THROW THE DY-NAMITE AT THEM? I CAN'T THROWN AS FAR AS THEY C'N SHOOT A WINCHESTER!

NO--THAT'S NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND!

THERE'S A SHALLOW HOLE OVER IN THE CORNER --I DUG IT WHEN THEY WEREN'T WATCHING ME! IF WE HIDE IN THAT HOLE... AND SET THIS DYNAMITE OFF, WHAT WILL THEY THINK HAPPENED TO US?

THEY'LL THINK A STRAY SLUG HIT THE STUFF AN' BLEW US SKY-HIGH! I'LL FIX THE FUSE, THEN HELP YUH INTO THAT HOLE, MARSHAL!

HURRY IT UP, SAM!

COME ON--SIT WITH YORE BACK TO THE SIDE NEAREST THE BLAST!

THIS AIN'T GONNA BE FUNNY! I HOPE WE DON'T GET BUSTED UP TOO MUCH!

COME ON--THEY'RE NOT SHOOTIN' BACK! WE PROB-ABLY GOT 'EM!

WE'LL RUSH THE....

THE RESULT OF THE BLAST WAS FRIGHTENING/ NOT A BOARD WAS LEFT INTACT....

THAT BLASTING POWDER WAS RIGHT UNDER THE MARSHAL'S BUNK/ LET'S GET BACK IN TOWN...I...I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD/

THEY MOVED AWAY...BUT FOR TWO HOURS THERE WAS NO SIGN OF LIFE/ AT LAST, THE RUBBLE COVERED BOARD COVERING THE HOLE WAS PUSHED ASIDE--

WATCH IT, SAM/ THEY MAY BE WATCHING FOR US/

IT WORKED, SAM/ NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

WE WAIT FOR DARK-- I'LL GET BIG MIKE'S BUCKBOARD AN' FAST TEAM--AN' WE HEAD FOR TOWN/

THEY WERE CELEBRATING IN BUZZARD VALLEY THAT NIGHT-- NO ONE SAW SAM AT THE CORRAL!

IT LOOKS LIKE A BIG NIGHT IN BUZZARD VALLEY! THEY'D BETTER CELEBRATE WHILE THEY HAVE THE CHANCE...

SALOO

I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW DAYS--SHERIFF FENSTER AND A POSSE'LL BE BACK WITH ME!

THE U.S. MARSHAL RODE IN THE BACK OF THE BUCKBOARD--SAM BLACK DELIVERED HIM TO A TUCSON DOCTOR LATE THE NEXT AFTERNOON!

I WAS PUZZLED ABOUT WHY YUH RAN FOR IT, SAM! THEN, MIKE PURDY TOLD ME ABOUT THE MARSHAL HE WAS HOLDIN' IN BUZZARD VALLEY!

M.D.

HE SAID WE'D NEVER SEE THE MARSHAL AGAIN IF WE DIDN'T TURN HIM AND DOGGO SYKES LOOSE! I LAUGHED AT HIM--I KNEW YOU'D BRING THE MARSHAL BACK!

NOW, I FEEL BETTER-- I'M SURE GLAD NOT TO BE ON THE DODGE ANY MORE!

WHEN YOU TAKE US INTO BUZZARD VALLEY, THEY'LL KNOW WHY YOU WERE THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY!

END

YOU'RE ONLY 18, YOU HAVEN'T HAD A SQUARE MEAL IN TWO YEARS SINCE THE LAW-MAN CAME AND TOOK YORE DADDY... THE TWO MEN WHO LET YOU HANG AROUND THEIR HIDE-OUT ARE CRUEL, HARSH MEN—BUT THEY'RE THE ONLY PEOPLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD WHO EVEN KNOW YOU'RE ALIVE! THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE NOW—IN THE MIDDLE OF ABILENE WITH A SHERIFF'S LEAD BURNING YOUR BACK, A BUCKING .45 IN YORE FIST!

THE OWLHOOTER

FIGHT 'EM, KYLE! DON'T SHOW YELLA TUH THE LAW!

BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM

THEN YUH'RE ALONE—YORE "FRIENDS" GONE WITH THE LOOT—ONLY STRANGERS WITH ROARING GUNS AROUND YUH NOW!

COME ON—I'LL FIGHT THE WHOLE TOWN!

THEN, THE QUIET HURT MY EARS... AND I FELT LIKE BAWLIN'!

HE'S JUST A KID— HOLD YORE FIRE!

DROP THE GUN, KID! WE'LL HAVE THE SAWBONES PLUG UP THAT HOLE IN YORE BACK!

...ALL RIGHT, I GIVE UP!

SOMEONE HELP ME WITH HIM—HE'S LOST A LOT OF BLOOD!

THAT'S THE WAY IT WENT ON MY FIRST JOB... I FIGGERED I'D RIDE THE OWLHOOT TRAIL ALL MY LIFE, I FIGGERED I'D GET CAUGHT SOONER OR LATER...

HOW'S THE LAW-MAN?

I'M ALL RIGHT, KID! YOU WERE LUCKY! YORE PALS PUT YUH OUT THERE T' DRAW OUR FIRE WHILE THEY GOT AWAY!

YEAH—I FIGGERED THAT OUT! I DON'T BLAME THEM ANY!

YUH MIGHT THINK I'D HATE THE MAN WHO SHOT ME — I DIDN'T! HE WAS PRETTY GOOD TO ME, EVEN AFTER I WAS WELL ENOUGH TUH BE MOVED TO A CELL...

TRIAL'S SET FOR A WEEK FROM NOW, KYLE. THOUGHT YUH'D LIKE TUH KNOW.

HOW COME YUH TREAT ME SQUARE, MARSHAL? I SHOT YUH, I RECKON— YUH GOT NO CALL TUH BE NICE TUH ME!

KYLE, I KNOW ABOUT YORE DADDY... I KNOW WHAT KIND OF A LIFE YUH'VE HAD UP TILL NOW! I DON'T BLAME YUH MUCH! IT'S WHAT YUH DO FROM NOW ON THAT'LL SHAPE YORE LIFE, KYLE! IT'S UP TO YOU!

I FELT GOOD AFTER HE LEFT— I REALLY BELIEVED HIS TALK — UNTIL I REMEMBERED THE TRIAL A WEEK AWAY AND PRISON AFTER THAT!

I KNOW HOW WRONG I WAS— I'VE GOT T'HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE! NEXT TIME I'LL BE SMARTER— I'LL GO STRAIGHT!

IF I ONLY COULD GET... THE BAR MOVED! IT'S LOOSE!

I WAITED UNTIL THREE THE NEXT MORNIN' TO MAKE MY MOVE— NOBODY EVEN WOKE UP WHEN I EELED THRU THE GAP THE LOOSE BAR LEFT!

I'M FREE! THEY'LL NEVER GET ME BACK IN THERE AGAIN!

I CAN'T GO MUCH FARTHER THIS WAY— I'VE GOTTA HAVE A HORSE! THE BOYS'LL STAKE ME TO ONE! THAT'S ALL I WANT! I DON'T WANT ANY OF THE STOLEN MONEY!

STOP THERE, SONNY! YUH GOT LAWMEN FOLLOWIN' YUH?

NO! THEY DON'T KNOW I BUSTED OUT! I'M SURE GLAD (PUFF) I MADE IT!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

WHAT WAS THAT FOR, BO?

YUH GAVE UP—YUH SHOWED YELLA INSTEAD OF GOIN' DOWN FIGHTIN'! GIT OUTA HERE!

I NEED A HORSE —THE LAW'S AFTER ME!

COME INSIDE, KID!

I GOTTA HAVE A HORSE —GOTTA GET AWAY FROM HERE—START A NEW LIFE! I'M GONNA MAKE SOMETHIN' OF MYSELF!

THAT LAWMAN'S BEEN TALKIN' TO YUH!

YOU'RE SOFT! I OUGHTA BELT...

DOUSE THAT LIGHT, SLIM! COMPANY'S COMIN'! SOUNDS LIKE ONLY ONE HORSE...

I KNEW WHO IT WAS—IT WAS THE LAWMAN AND I KNEW WHY HE CAME ALONE... HE REALLY DID WANT TO HELP ME OUT!

KYLE! YUH IN THERE, BOY? YUH HAVE T'COME BACK—IT'S NOT AS BAD AS YUH THINK!

NO, YUH DON'T, BO!

I'D ALWAYS BEEN SCARED STIFF OF TUCKER... WHEN HE TURNED, THE RIFLE LIKE A CLUB IN HIS FISTS, I THOUGHT I WAS DONE FOR! BUT I DIDN'T SHOW YELLA!

KYLE? YUH ALL RIGHT? I'M COMIN', BOY!

CRASSH

I'LL TEACH... AAAHHHH!

YUH PUSHED ME AROUND LONG ENOUGH, TUCKER! NOW IT'S MY TURN!

YUH DID ALL RIGHT, SON, YUH DID FINE! HELP ME GET THIS PAIR ONTO HORSES...

YEAH, I KNOW— SO YUH CAN TAKE THE THREE OF US TUH JAIL!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT, KYLE! YUH'RE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT NOW!

I BELIEVED HIM—AND I WAS! THE JUDGE LET ME PLEAD GUILTY—I DIDN'T STAND A JURY TRIAL!

KYLE BRODY, I'M PAROLING YOU IN MARSHAL BLAINE'S CUSTODY! IF I HEAR THAT YOU GOT OUT OF LINE, I'LL THROW THE BOOK AT YOU! ALL RIGHT, MARSHAL, TAKE HIM HOME WITH YOU. GOOD LUCK, SON!

END